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## **Analysis Of Tchaikowsky's Overture Fantasy To Romeo And Juliet**

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ANALYSIS OF TCHAIKOWSKY'S OVERTURE FANTASY  
TO ROMEO AND JULIET



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ANALYSIS OF TCHAIKOWSKY'S OVERTURE FANTASY TO  
ROMEO AND JULIET

By

Ruth Lee Upton - Mundine

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Music

in the

Graduate Division

of

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College

Prairie View, Texas

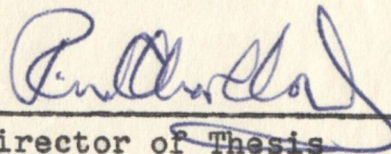
August, 1951



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Accepted by the faculty of the Department  
of Music of Prairie View Agricultural and  
Mechanical College as fulfilling the thesis  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Music

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Thesis

Committee  \_\_\_\_\_, Chairman



Dedication

This thesis is dedicated  
to my family

Mr. and Mrs. W. Jacques Upton

Mrs. Naomi Upton-Scott

and to my husband

Mr. Joy Frank Mundine

### Acknowledgement

The author wishes to express her appreciation to all those through whose assistance she was able to complete the analysis. She is particularly indebted to the staffs of both the Negro Branch of the Carnegie Library and the college library for assistance in obtaining data; to Doctor James E. Dorsey who heads the College of Fine Arts at Texas Southern University and most of all to Doctor R. von Charlton for his assistance, his advice, and his helpful suggestions.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Chapter                                   | Page |
|---|------|
| I. INTRODUCTION.....                      | 1    |
| Statement of the Problem.....             | 1    |
| Purpose.....                              | 1    |
| Delimitations.....                        | 1    |
| Method of Procedure.....                  | 2    |
| II. THE COMPOSER.....                     | 3    |
| Biographical Sketch.....                  | 3    |
| Tchaikowsky - the Russian.....            | 9    |
| Tchaikowsky - the Romanticist.....        | 10   |
| Tchaikowsky - the Composer.....           | 12   |
| Tchaikowsky and the Overture Fantasy..... | 13   |
| III. THE ANALYSIS.....                    | 15   |
| Synopsis of Romeo and Juliet.....         | 15   |
| Sonata Allegro Form.....                  | 17   |
| Detailed Analysis as to Form.....         | 22   |
| IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....           | 30   |
| Summary.....                              | 30   |
| Conclusion.....                           | 31   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY.....                         | 32   |



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

This study is concerned with giving a detailed formal analysis of Tchaikowsky's Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet.

#### Purpose

The purpose of the analysis is to give the listener the overall design or pattern of the composition for an improvement in interpreting the work. It is to serve as a sort of guide by which the listener is enabled to see the structure and form of the composition. Its aim is to enable the listener to recognize the way in which the composer constructed this work; to recognize the various parts of the composition and how each part is related to every other part and to the whole. When one is able to interpret good music, then his appreciation, interest, and enjoyment are increased. The objective is to show how program music is constructed; and how various thematic schemes are used to tell a story.

#### Delimitations

This study does not include all of Tchaikowsky's works. It is limited to the Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet. It includes a biographical sketch of the composer; the influence of his country on his work; the influence of



the Romantic Period on him; a resume of his style of writing, and how he wrote this particular composition. It gives the synopsis of the story which the composition itself tells, and its complete analysis as to form.

### Method of Procedure

A very limited number of detailed analyses is at the disposal of students in the Department of Music and those persons interested in this type of study. This particular analysis includes reference materials taken from the college library, the Negro Branch of the Carnegie Library at Houston, the private libraries of Dr. R. von Charlton and Rowland J. Martin, program notes from the Houston Symphony Orchestra, recordings of the Overture Fantasy, and the orchestral score.



## CHAPTER II

### THE COMPOSER

#### Biographical Sketch

Peter Illitch Tchaikowsky was born in 1840 in the little village of Votkinsk in eastern Russia. His father, a mining engineer, provided his family with a comfortable living. His mother was a very gracious hostess, and as a result, their house was used as a sort of social center for the few cultured families in the area.

As a child, Peter was very prococious. When he was four years old, his father employed a governess, Fanny, to take care of the educational training of Peter's older brother and a cousin who lived with the Tchaikowskys. Peter, because of his age, was not allowed to attend classes, but in order to keep peace in the household, the family had to cater to his whims. He proved to be quite a bright youngster. At the age of six he was able to read both French and German fluently.

Even as a child, Peter was passionately Russian. One day his governess found him with a map of Europe, fervently kissing Russia, and as fervently spitting upon the rest of the world. "When I told him he ought to be ashamed of such behavior," Fanny writes, "and that it was wicked to hate his fellow man who said the same 'Our Father' as himself, and reminded him that he was spitting



upon his own Fanny who was a Frenchwoman, he replied, 'Oh you need not scold me, didn't you see me cover France with my hand first?'"<sup>1</sup>

Peter's parents had no idea that their son was musically inclined, so they sent him to law school. He finished and took a job that provided him with a comfortable living. He played around with music and musicians and became rather popular among his friends in that he was able to improvise many of the dance tunes of his day.

Then came the time in his life when he found that he could no longer live without music. So, with one of those "genuinely Russian gestures," he suddenly gave up everything and plunged into music.<sup>2</sup> Nothing gives us so complete an insight into the personal attitude of Tchaikowsky toward his art than the moving letter to Mme. von Meck in which he pays a most wonderful tribute to music:

You see, my dear friend, I am made up of contradictions, and I have reached a very mature age without resting upon anything positive, without having calmed my restless spirit either by religion or philosophy. Undoubtedly, I should have gone mad but for music. Music is indeed the most beautiful of all Heaven's gifts to humanity wandering in the darkness. Alone it calms, enlightens, and stills our souls. It is not the straw to which the drowning man clings; but a true friend, refuge and comforter for whose sake life is worth living. Perhaps there will be no music in heaven. Well, then,

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<sup>1</sup>  
Lillian Baldwin, A Listener's Anthology of Music, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>  
Kurt Pahlen, Music of the World, p. 260.



let us give our mortal life to it as long as it lasts.<sup>1</sup>

Tchaikowsky had a very poor beginning as a musician. Although he was employed and making a fairly good salary, he spent it as he made it by entertaining his friends and living quite frivolously. As a result, when he gave up his job, he had no money. His family was no help to him in that his mother had died of cholera, and the small fortune which his father had amassed had dwindled to nothing. These circumstances, however, did not change Tchaikowsky's mind in the least. His first break came when Nicholas Rubenstein founded the Conservatory of Music in Moscow and employed Tchaikowsky as Professor of Harmony. By this time, Tchaikowsky had developed a strong desire to write music. However, because of his financial circumstances, he was unable to give up his job completely, and it was almost impossible for him to write music along with his heavy schedule of classes.

As fate would have it, while Tchaikowsky was going through a desperate struggle, both financially and emotionally, there lived in Moscow a quiet middle-aged woman named Nadejda Filaretovna von Meck who was to play a most important part in his life. She was a very strong willed and determined woman. Her husband, through her courage

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<sup>1</sup>  
Edwin Stringham, Listening to Music Creatively, p. 175.



and good business sense had risen from a petty government official to a wealthy railroad engineer. Her children, through her most capable guidance and management were able to live normal, comfortable lives. Now widowed and living in retirement on the fortune her husband had amassed, Mme. von Meck was able to gratify the one great desire of her life, that of music. She learned of Tchaikowsky's music through Nicholas Rubenstein. Being a patron of the Moscow Conservatory, she welcomed Rubenstein into her home. Knowing how she loved music, Rubenstein would bring over compositions and play for her. On one particular day, he brought one of Tchaikowsky's works. Mme. von Meck was very favorably impressed, however, she did not learn until later of the financial difficulties of the young composer. She became interested in Tchaikowsky's welfare to the extent of giving him large commissions for small works. When Tchaikowsky asked her why she granted him so much for so little, she answered his letter very frankly admitting that his music filled the empty space in her life. After this Mme. von Meck settled a considerable life annuity on Tchaikowsky that he might devote himself entirely to composition. She made but one condition, and it was religiously observed by both parties concerned: that they were never to meet. Their correspondence is preserved in the book *Beloved Friend* by Catherine Drinker Bowen and Barbara von Meck. Tchaikowsky was now free. He went on long trips, settling wherever he liked and creating work upon work.



In his twenties, Tchaikowsky fell in love with Desiree Artot, the prima donna of an Italian opera company, who in turn was swept off her feet by his advances. Undoubtedly, she led him on until he demanded that she marry him. Desiree flatly refused to give up her career, and Tchaikowsky refused to follow her around, writing music in dressing rooms and known only as "Desiree's husband." Suddenly, without any explanation whatever, she married the tenor of the company. This act was supposed to have left Tchaikowsky heartbroken. Just at this point, ironically, Balakireff commissioned him to write an opera on Shakespeare's great love story, Romeo and Juliet. Tchaikowsky completed only the overture into which he put a very haunting love song - supposedly expressive of all his pain and longing.

When Tchaikowsky was 37, he married a young woman whom he scarcely knew. What happened is told in the following letter to Mme. von Meck:

... I find myself confronted by a painful dilemma; either I must keep my freedom at the expense of this woman's tragedy, (this is no empty word, for she loves me intensely) or I must marry. I could but choose the latter course. Therefore, I went one evening to my future wife and told her frankly that I could not love her, but that I would be a devoted and grateful (husband) friend. I described to her in detail my character, my irritability, my nervous temperament, and finally my financial situation. Then I asked her if she would care to be my wife. Her answer was, of course, in the affirmative.



The agonies I have endured since that evening defy description.<sup>1</sup>

In a few months, the marriage failed, and Tchaikowsky became so ill with a nervous breakdown that he almost went insane. As soon as he was strong enough to travel, his brother took him to Switzerland where they spent the autumn, and to Italy where they spent the winter. Tchaikowsky finally regained his health; little by little resumed his work, and was soon able to return to his beloved Russia, a sound and eager man.

The last years of Tchaikowsky's life were full of travel for he had become famous and was in demand both at home and abroad. In 1891, he visited New York as guest conductor at the opening of Carnegie Hall. He gave six concerts in America; four in New York, one in Philadelphia and one in Baltimore. His diary revealed how much he liked America. In spite of his usual restlessness and homesickness for his beloved Russia, he had a very good time in America and found the country most interesting. "The houses downtown," he writes, "are simply colossal. I cannot understand how anyone can live on the thirteenth floor!"<sup>2</sup>

In 1893, Tchaikowsky, who literally had the world at his feet, went to St. Petersburg to conduct the initial performance of his Pathétique Symphony. Shortly after the

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine Bowen and Barbara von Meck, Beloved Friend, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Lillian Baldwin, A Listener's Anthology of Music, p. 195.



concert, he drank a glass of unfiltered water. Three days later, Russia's best known and best loved composer, aged 53, was dead of cholera.

Tchaikowsky's best loved works include:

Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet

Symphony No. 2

Symphony No. 3

Symphony No. 4

Symphony No. 5

Symphony No. 6

Piano Concerto in B<sup>b</sup> Minor

Nutcracker Suite

Eugene Onegin (opera).

### Tchaikowsky - the Russian

Because of Russia's history, which is for the most part a chronicle of wars and invasions, the musical development of the country was stifled. The greatest turning point in its history came with the reign of Peter the Great (1689-1729). He believed that Russia (then under eastern influence) in order to become powerful, must be made western. He copied the manners and customs of western Europe, and made those around his court copy them too.<sup>1</sup> He is said to have invited musicians from western Europe to play in his court in an attempt to influence the musicians of his own Russia.

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<sup>1</sup>

Howard Anderson et. al., World History, p. 291.



Through the years, the development of a new Russia was obvious. However, the idea of suffering, the aggressiveness, emotional conflict... all these characteristics of a suffering nation remained with Russia. So typical was Russia's spirit of it all!

Tchaikowsky, with whom we are concerned, loved every expression of this Russian spirit. This fact is brought out in his works. They are for the most part very emotional and very much agitated. In the Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet, what is more stirring and appealing than the D<sup>b</sup> Major subordinate theme? or what is more agitated than the B minor Allegro main theme? If Russia's spirit is expressed in terms of emotion, suffering, and agitation, then Tchaikowsky is truly Russian.

### Tchaikowsky - the Romanticist

In the 19th century, there came to light a new trend of thought - that of freedom of the individual. This new trend was the result of the French Revolution. The aristocracy was overthrown by the merchants and industrialists - the middle class of people who one author describes as the "unsophisticated type of humanity who dwelt in village cottages rather than in lordly halls." This overthrow freed all the artists and composers who before were simply servants of the king, members of the court and then paid them for their work. Even those composers who were free lance were only able to work by certain forms. If a com-



poser had a creative urge, he would first decide what he was going to write, a fugue, a sonata, etc., and then conform strictly to the rules governing his specific choice. There was to be nothing emotional in the composition.

With the Romantic movement came freedom from this sort of thing. Men could write as they desired. They could give vent to those emotional urges which had been pent up for so long. We must not forget, though in the swing of the new movement, that all music had its foundation in that Classical period. Romanticism is really an embellishment of Classicism.

One of the most important developments of the new movement was that it brought music, art, and literature closer together. Composers began to tell stories in music. They began to present ideas and moods through various themes. Such is the story behind Tchaikowsky's Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet. The whole love story is told by means of various themes.

The musical Romanticists seemed to have shown a higher degree of nervousness than their predecessors. They lived, in a general sense, at a higher degree of pressure.<sup>1</sup> The Classicists were not under this pressure because they knew that they would have to conform to certain standards in their work; but the Romanticists had to use "these certain standards" along with their new found freedom to explore

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<sup>1</sup>

Vernon Lee, Music and Its Lovers, p. 6-28.



man's mind, his emotions, nature in its beauty as well as its terror and set what he found to music.

It was during this period that Tchaikowsky wrote, and so fitting was his temperament to the times in which he lived.

### Tchaikowsky - the Composer

Tchaikowsky described composition as being a process of soul confession pouring itself out through the medium of sound just as the lyric poet pours himself out in verse.<sup>1</sup> Certainly this is a true statement - one which he proved in his compositions, because they are for the most part results of his emotions.

Tchaikowsky's works are typically Russian. He uses minor tonality, capricious rhythms, somber chromatic progressions, harsh combinations, and repetition of abrupt figures.<sup>2</sup> Of course, some of his works are lighter, but for the most part they are expressions of the Russian thinking of his day.

As a composer, he contributed much toward the development of program music. His Overture Fantasy to Romeo and Juliet is one of the most beautiful examples of a story told in music.

His works include eleven operas, three ballets, a coronation cantata with orchestra, two masses, six symphonies, seven symphonic poems, four orchestral suites,

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<sup>1</sup>Mckinney and Anderson, Music in History p. 714.

<sup>2</sup>Edward Dickinson, The Study of the History of Music, p. 381.



three overtures, three piano concertos, a piano fantasia with orchestra, a violin concerto, a capriccio for cello with orchestra, string sextet, three string quartets, a piano trio, pieces for violin and cello, a sonata, twelve characteristic pieces, six duets, and some Russian songs.<sup>1</sup>

### Tchaikowsky - and the Overture Fantasy

The overture is usually an extended symphonic composition most frequently in sonata-allegro form in which both the main and subordinate themes take on programmatic significances, either from the drama or opera for which the overture might serve as an opener, or if the overture is an independent concert piece, it gets its themes from the story.<sup>2</sup> When a work of this type is written for the concert stage instead of the theater, it often has the label rhapsody or fantasy. This label shows that the composer follows his own whims rather than any set form.<sup>3</sup>

Tchaikowsky's overture fantasy is classed as program music because it depends not only upon material, form, and procedure, but also the story Romeo and Juliet for its effect.

The Artot episode may have acted as a stimulus for Tchaikowsky's writing the Overture Fantasy, because his mind was certainly conducive to tragic expression. But the real suggestion for using Shakespeare's tragedy came

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<sup>1</sup>Rupert Hughes, et. al., Music Lover's Encyclopedia, p. 431.

<sup>2</sup>Edwin Stringham, op. cit., p. 332.

<sup>3</sup>Elie Seigmeister, The Music Lovers' Handbook, p. 103.



from Balakireff, head of a group of five young Russian composers - excluding Tchaikowsky, who believed that Russian music should come from Russia. He went so far as to outline the entire scheme to Tchaikowsky making it so appealing that the young composer immediately became interested in the project. Balakireff suggested keys and hints for themes and their development. Four months went by before Tchaikowsky actually went to work on the composition. In the meantime, Balakireff kept in close touch with Tchaikowsky. Finally Tchaikowsky presented the overture to Balakireff and Rimsky-Korsakoff, also a member of the "Five," a finished product.



## CHAPTER III

### THE ANALYSIS

#### Synopsis of Romeo and Juliet

The Veronese households of Montague and Capulet have had a feud of long standing which has brought about continued street brawls between members of the families from the highest relatives to the lowest servants. Capulet gives a masked ball in honor of his daughter Juliet's birthday, to which all of his friends are invited. The Montagues, of course, are not, but Romeo in order to see his old flame Rosaline dons a mask and attends. Here he discovers Juliet but is disappointed when he finds that she is of the house of Capulet. In the meantime, Tybalt, nephew of Lady Capulet, recognizes Romeo and only a miracle stopped the fight. As fate would have it, Juliet upon seeing Romeo, immediately fell in love with him. Sad and blue, she goes out on the balcony and sings her secret to the moon and stars. It happens that Romeo is underneath her balcony and hears her confess her love for him. Overjoyed, he reveals his presence and the lovers decide to marry the next day in the cell of Friar Laurence.

On the day of the wedding, two of Romeo's friends, Benvolio and Mercutio, while walking through the streets of Verona, are accosted by Tybalt who wants to fight Romeo because he dared to attend the Capulet's ball.



After the quarrel, Romeo appears, but is in no mood to fight as he is just returning from his wedding. Mercutio, who exasperatedly fights Tybalt in Romeo's stead, is killed. Romeo then kills Tybalt in revenge. By mandate of the Prince of Verona, Romeo is sent from the country, leaving Juliet, his bride of one night.

Juliet's father, knowing nothing of the secret marriage prepares for her marriage to her kinsman, the young Paris. In despair, Juliet consults Friar Laurence who gives her a potion which presumably puts her to death. His plan was to have Romeo come for her but before he had the chance to notify Romeo of the sham death, other messengers, tell him that Juliet is dead. Romeo, frantic with grief, procures a deadly poison and decides to die with his wife. At the door of the tomb, he kills Paris. He then enters the tomb, drinks the potion and dies. A few moments later Juliet wakes up, sees her dead lover, and learns the truth from Friar Laurence. She seizes Romeo's dagger and kills herself. The double tragedy so affects the Montagues and the Capulets that they finally become reconciled.<sup>1</sup>



### Sonata Allegro Form

When we speak of form in music, we simply mean order. Just as an architect must have a design or plan to build a house, a composer must have a form or design in order to successfully construct a musical composition. His composition must have unity and variety and these two must be evenly balanced. When the parts of a composition are just jumbled together with no regard whatever to their relationship to each other, then the composition is no good. The composer must have unity in order that one might understand the impressions that he is trying to make, his motives, themes and figures. Then he must have variety in order that his composition will not become monotonous. As a result we have one composition with two or more main themes.

The fully developed sonata allegro form is the design in which the classical overture and the first movement of the symphony, sonata, and concerto are usually written. It derived its name from the species of the sonata which was generally written in one movement only, that being an allegro.<sup>1</sup> In the sonata allegro form, we find these fundamental principles of musical structure - unity and variety - worked out very thoroughly and completely. There are two well defined themes in contrasting character and tonality which are introduced, developed, and then recapitulated or restated.

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<sup>1</sup>

Percy Goetschius, Lessons in Music Form, p. 124.



The sonata-allegro form has the following divisions:

The Introduction is in most cases an adagio or andante passage consisting of a few bars, not for the most part a portion of the actual composition unless the composer deems it plausible. Often the introduction is very slow because it is in direct contrast to the main which is usually an allegro. The introduction to the Overture Fantasy is an andante passage in chorale like harmony depicting the sanctity of Friar Laurence.

The EXPOSITION presents or exposes the two themes or groups of themes upon which the movement is constructed. The first theme is played in the tonic or home key, the subordinate or second theme is in a contrasting key. The second theme is usually in the dominant key, the subordinate theme is in its relative major. There is usually a Transition between these two themes and a Codetta to end the section. There may be a closing theme also. In Tchaikowsky's Overture Fantasy the principal theme is in B minor allegro suggestive of the raging feud between the Montagues and Capulets. There occurs an Episode which leads to the new key of the subordinate theme, that of the lovers, Romeo and Juliet in D<sup>b</sup> Major.



The Codetta closes the Exposition.

The DEVELOPMENT GROUP is made up of extensive and elaborate manipulation and combination of such figures, motives, phrases or parts of the exposition as prove inviting and convenient to the composer. Here opportunity is provided for the exhibition of technical skill and imagination. In some cases there is an intermingling of new material.<sup>1</sup> In the Overture Fantasy, the Development Group includes the violins making broad sweeps; the theme depicting the raging feud between the Montagues and the Capulets which is presented in a most exciting development. The Friar Laurence theme is played and answered with the rhythmic feud theme. The mood of strife becomes gradually intensified until the whole orchestra joins in. With broad sweeping passages on the strings so typical of Tchaikowsky, we are led into the next division.

The RECAPITULATION is simply a review of all material presented with such modifications and alternations that the composer sees fit to employ. It is really a more or less literal repetition of the first division.<sup>2</sup> The Recapitulation gives a "return home" feeling with all of the material in the main key.

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<sup>1</sup>  
Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>  
Karl Gehrken, The Fundamentals of Music, p. 149.



When all of the material in the composition has been reviewed, then to close it would not leave the listener in suspense. To close a composition at the end of the Development Group would not make for very good balance or unity. So, this "return home" feeling is the basis used for a re-statement of the thematic materials in the composition. In the Overture Fantasy the themes of Romeo and Juliet, the fighting Montagues and Capulets, and Friar Laurence are heard followed by a roll of kettledrums and ending with a fierce orchestral crash.

The following diagram will help in visualizing the entire structure of the sonata-allegro form.

#### Slow Introduction (optional)

| <u>Exposition</u>  | <u>Development</u>  | <u>Recapitulation</u>                      |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Principal theme in tonic key.                         | Modulates freely  | 1. Principal theme in tonic key            |
| Transition, modulating to                                | Presents the thematic material of the Exposition in new combinations and transformations. | 2. Subordinate theme-tonic key             |
| 2. Subordinate theme in dominant or relative major, etc. | Leads back to --  | All other themes Closing theme - Tonic key |
| 3. Closing theme   |   | Coda                                       |
| 4. Codetta   |   | Final and closing cadence.                 |

In spite of the fact that the story of Shakespeare's story of Romeo and Juliet serves as a basis for the Overture Fantasy, the composer could not follow the story in sequence.



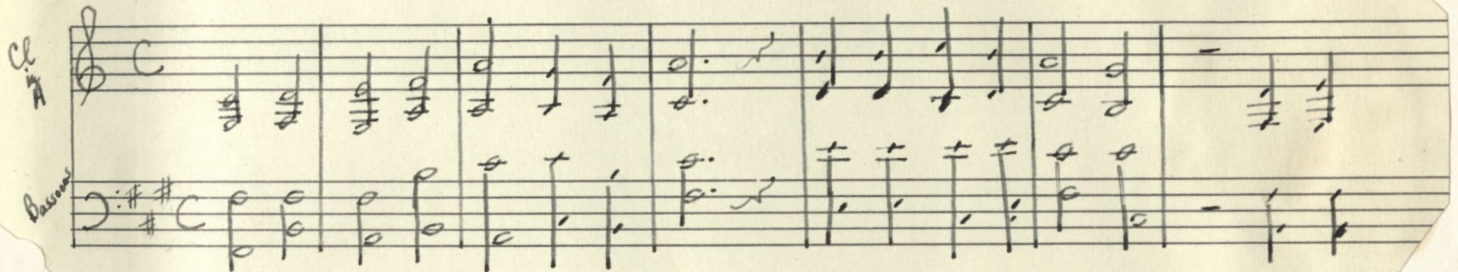
Musical works have a structure and organization of their own, aside from those used in drama. In several instances where the sequence of events in the story were in conflict with what the composer thought of as being desirable in the way of musical structure, the desirable structure determined the outcome.

In the story of Romeo and Juliet, Friar Laurence does not appear until the middle of the play, but in the Overture Fantasy the theme depicting Friar Laurence is used as the introduction. The love affair of Romeo and Juliet is the essence of the story but in the Overture Fantasy, the theme depicting the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets is used as the main theme, because its intensity makes for a better main theme than the haunting love song. However, the love theme does maintain its prominence in that Tchaikowsky uses it as the second theme. The chorale theme depicting Friar Laurence provides a very good contrast between the intensely dramatic main theme and the hauntingly sweet love song, and as a result is found in fragments throughout the Overture Fantasy.



### Detailed Analysis as to Form

The Introduction to the Overture Fantasy is a chorale passage for clarinets in A and bassoons. Its somber church-like chords are depicting the sanctity of Friar Laurence. The passage is very slow and sustained.



The strings with sustained tones build up dissonances to the entrance of flutes, backed up later by the strings playing in thirds. The theme enters again, this time in flutes, oboes, and clarinets with a running accompaniment on the strings, followed by the same sustained dissonances that followed its first entrance.

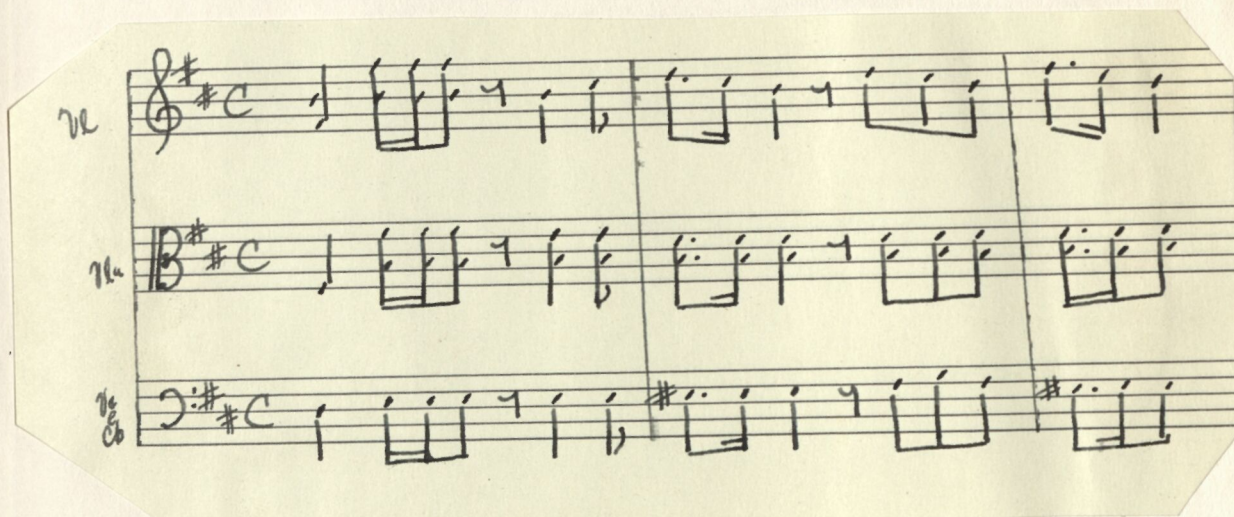




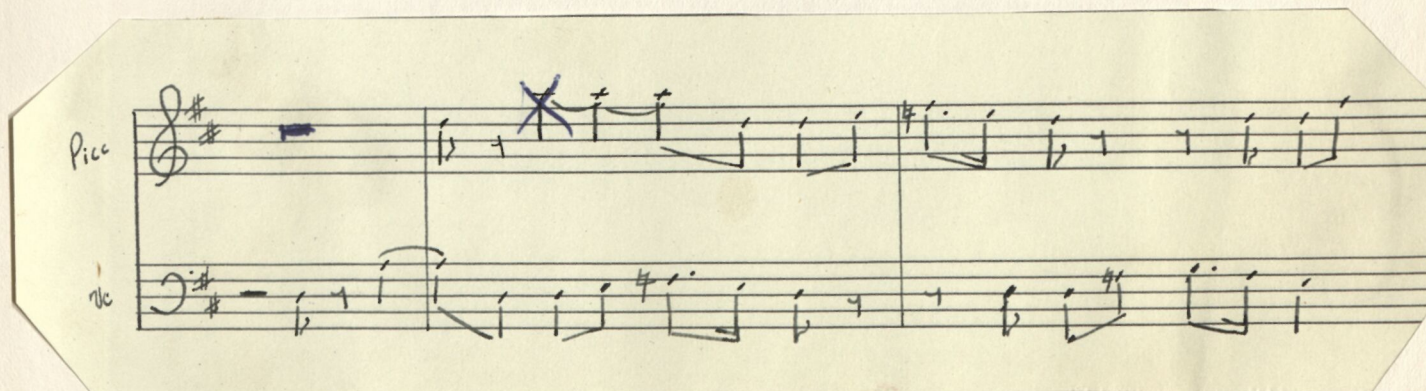
The Transition occurs using a fragment of the chorale theme and a short allegro passage followed by quiet chords. Here we are prepared for the main theme.

# EXPOSITION

The principal theme, measure 111, is a violently rhythmical B Minor allegro guisto suggestive of the raging feud between the Montagues and the Capulets.



Beginning with measure 125, the main theme is played in the celli and bass and imitated one half measure later in piccolo, flutes and oboes.

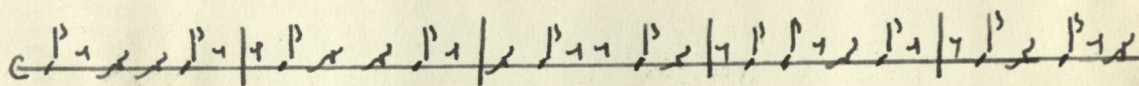




Here Tchaikowsky proves himself very ingenious for this pattern definitely intensifies the mood of conflict which he is portraying. Following this statement of the main theme is a broad sweeping passage by the strings punctuated with crashing chords so typical of Tchaikowsky's writing. Lillian Baldwin in her Listener's Anthology of Music, page 200, says:

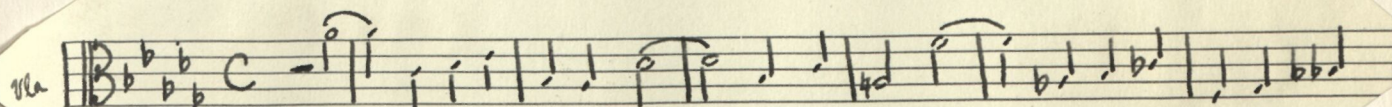
The crashing chords suggest the clashing of blades while the excited running figure in the strings might well be the footwork of the swordsmen.

The rhythmic line:



Measure 150 brings a very loud, dramatic statement of the main theme. Measures 164-182 contain the Episode. Here the excitement dies out and we are prepared for the subordinate theme in D<sup>b</sup> Major.

The dolce espressivo subordinate theme enters - played by English horns and muted violas.





There have been many interesting comments made concerning this particular theme. In the first place it is a very poignant haunting one, typically "Tchaikowskian." When the Overture Fantasy is finished, this particular theme is the one most likely to remain with the listener. It is supposedly the love theme of Romeo, from which there has been transcribed a popular number entitled "Our Love." It seemed that Tchaikowsky had a gift for writing such melodies. The theme from the Andante Cantabile movement of his Symphony No. 5 has also been transcribed, the popular version of which is "Moon Love." The subordinate theme from his Symphony No. 6 (Pathetique) has a popular transcription, "Story of a Starry Night." The popular version of his Piano Concerto No. 1 in B<sup>b</sup> minor is called "Tonight We Love." With this in mind, there is no wonder that this particular melody should escape perpetuation.

The subordinate, or love theme of Romeo is immediately answered by muted violins playing in four part harmony. This has been referred to as the Juliet theme.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper. It consists of three staves. The top two staves are grouped by a brace on the left, with a 're' marking. The bottom staff is marked with 'vi'. The music is written in a key with four flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat) and a common time signature. The first measure of each staff contains a whole rest. The second measure of the top staff has a blue 'b' note. The second measure of the middle staff has a 'pp' (pianissimo) marking. The notation includes various note values, rests, and stems.



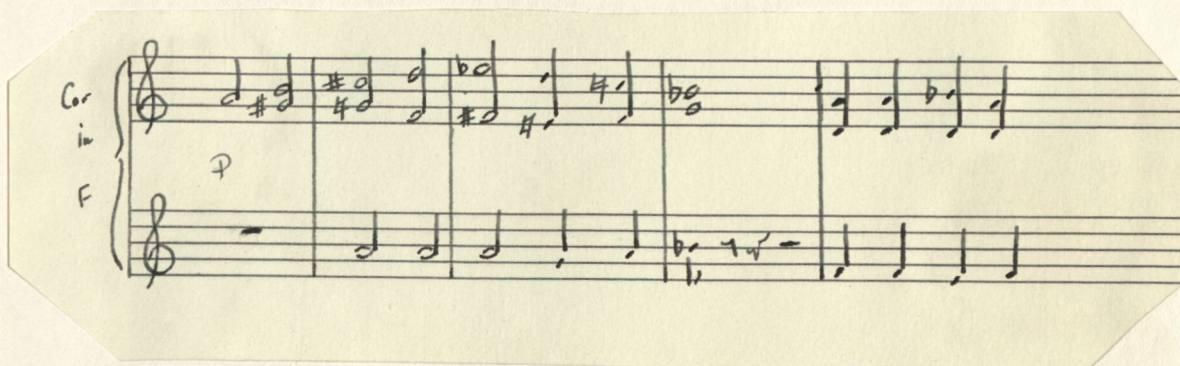
Concerning this theme, Lawrence Gilman remarked, "There are not many things in modern music more justly and beautifully expressive, more richly poetic, than the mood of the enraptured pair as they watch the coming of dawn in Juliet's chamber."<sup>1</sup> Balakireff, in his delight over the Juliet theme exclaimed, "It has the sweetness of love, its tenderness, its longing."<sup>2</sup>

The muted strings and harp in transitory chords lead to a brilliant chromatic run introducing the flutes and oboes in the second statement of the subordinate theme. Following a 13 measure interlude (220-233), there occurs a most intense and dramatic third statement of the subordinate theme.

Using the harp and fragmentary materials, the Codetta closes the Exposition.

#### DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The Development Group opens with the first horns playing the chorale theme followed at measure 292 by a harmonized re-statement of the same theme by three horns.




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<sup>1</sup> Edwin Stringham, Listening to Music Creatively, p. 178.  
<sup>2</sup> Lillian Baldwin, Listener's Anthology of Music, p. 200.



One of the most interesting passages in the Development Group begins with measure 334 where the trumpets play the choral theme while the orchestra answers with the B minor allegro (main theme).

Handwritten musical score for measures 334-337. The score is written on five staves. The first two staves are for Cor in F (Cornet in F), the third staff is for Tr E (Trumpet in E), the fourth staff is for Tbn (Trombone), and the fifth staff is for Tba (Tuba). The music is in B minor, indicated by the key signature of one flat (B-flat) and the presence of natural signs on the F and C notes in the key signature. The tempo is marked 'allegro' and the dynamics are marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The music features a choral theme in the trumpets and a main theme in the orchestra.

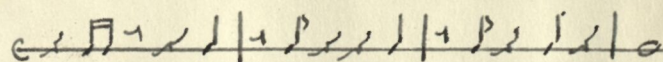
This particular passage again shows Tchaikovsky's genius in portraying excitement, intensity, and drama. The strings return with their broad sweeping passages punctuated with crashing chords.

The whole development group takes the introductory (chorale) theme and the main theme and carries them through various forms.









When the Overture Fantasy was introduced to the public, some of Tchaikowsky's friends protested his ending it in this way. Mme. Rimsky-Korsakoff, who made the piano arrangement, was finally given permission to let the music die away with the last violin tones (516-517), the original ending with measure 521.



## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### Summary

In view of the foregoing discussion we find that the sonata-allegro form is one in which the two fundamentals of good music, unity and variety, are carried to their fullest realization. The sonata-allegro form has three divisions preceded by an optional introduction. The three divisions are: (1) the Exposition wherein the main and subordinate themes are introduced; (2) the Development Group where the composer uses his ingenuity in working out these themes; (3) and the Recapitulation which reviews the principal themes of the composition.

This particular composition, written in sonata-allegro form has an andante hymnlike introduction representing Friar Laurence; its main theme which is suggestive of the fighting Veronese households of Montague and Capulet; and the subordinate love theme of Romeo and Juliet. These themes are introduced, developed and restated.

This type of music is classed as program music, because, not only does it have form, but it uses as its background a work of literature. It tells the actual story of Shakespeare's drama in music.

Although this is one of Tchaikowsky's earlier works, it is classed as one of his best.



### Conclusion

The author concludes that more analyses of standard musical compositions by great composers should be made and placed at the disposal of students and other persons interested. They will be of great service to students in analytical courses, and will help in the interpretation of, interest in, and appreciation for recognized standard compositions.



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